

U. S. ARMY STRIKE FORCE--A RELEVANT CONCEPT?

A MONOGRAPH
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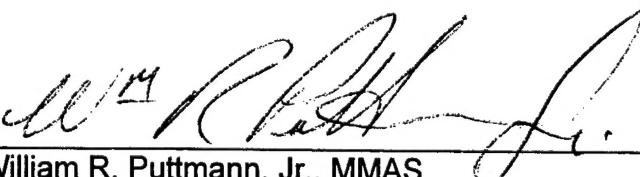
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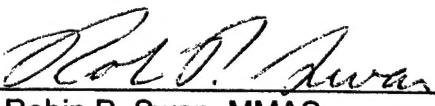
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ABSTRACT

U. S. ARMY STRIKE FORCE – A RELEVANT CONCEPT? By LtCol Mark G. Cianciolo, USMC, 56 pages.

Since January 1999, there has been a tremendous level of debate within the U. S. Army concerning how it should be organized and how it should deploy; specifically, its ability to rapidly deploy within 96 hours and provide a deterrence force of two to five thousand personnel. Army advocates for change argue that the Army's current force structure consists of heavy mechanized forces and light airborne forces, but no medium-weight, rapidly deployable, ground force capability that can perform a multi-mission role. This role should cover a wide spectrum to include decisive combat and operations other than war, specifically, support and stability operations. In order to bridge this gap, the Army's Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) has been designated the proponent to develop a rapidly deployable, medium-weight force; its name, Strike Force. As the proponent, TRADOC has developed a Strike Force Operational and Organizational Concept – a concept that has recently been approved by General Reimer, Army Chief of Staff.

Many critics challenge the validity of the Strike Force concept, as the need for this capability has appeared to materialize from nowhere. Those critics have brought to the forefront several fundamental questions; such as, what are the operational requirements, purpose, and mission of such a force? Is there a current shortfall regarding the Strike Force concept within the Department of Defense in general and within in the U. S. Army in specific? Would the establishment of such a force be redundant with current Army or other service capabilities? Does the Army envision a requirement to change its methods of force tailoring and organizing forces for operations in order to meet the dynamic needs of emerging and future operational requirements? This monograph explores the viability of the Strike Force concept in terms of the U. S. Army's current and future mission requirements.

The evaluation criteria identified for this monograph has been designed to assess the requirement for a Strike Force capability within the U. S. Army. More specifically, evaluation criteria has been based upon data assembled from several secondary sources to include current Army mission statements and functions, the Army Universal Task List (AUTL), Joint Vision 2010 and Army Vision 2010, and the five goals of the Army After Next (AAN) Modernization Plan. Also, the method of establishing a Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) and the Marine Corps Standing Joint Task Force (SJTF) Headquarters concept served as evaluation criteria to validate the organizational methodology and headquarters structure of the Strike Force O&O Concept.

The monograph concludes that the Army's Strike Force Organizational and Operational Concept is valid and should be explored further as outlined in United States Army Posture Statement Fiscal Year 2000. The monograph also identifies several recommendations Strike Force planners must consider in the further development of the Strike Force O&O Concept.

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Chapter I: Introduction

With the 21st century rapidly approaching, there has been a tremendous level of debate concerning the future of the United States Army; specifically, its ability to rapidly organize and deploy forces within 96 hours in order to provide an effective contingency of two to five thousand personnel.¹ Army advocates for change argue that the current force structure provides for heavy mechanized forces and light airborne forces, but no medium-weight, rapidly deployable, ground force capability that can perform a multi-mission role – a role covering a wide spectrum from decisive combat (offensive/defensive operations), to operations other than war (OOTW), such as support and stability operations.² In order to bridge this gap, an initiative has been championed by the Army's Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) to develop a rapidly deployable, medium-weight force, its name – Strike Force – a concept that has become a controversial topic.³ In an effort to establish this capability, supporters targeted the 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment located at Fort Polk, Louisiana, for reorganization as the Army's Strike Force, the recommendation; however, was modified by General Reimer, U. S. Army Chief of Staff, citing prohibitive cost and negative impact upon future modernization efforts.⁴ In an attempt to compromise, General Reimer has given the go-ahead to keep the concept alive by experimenting with a Strike Force headquarters element.⁵ As the need for this capability has appeared to materialize from nowhere, many critics question the validity of the Strike Force concept. Amidst the secrecy and “close-hold” approach Strike Force advocates have appeared to embrace, are several fundamental questions that must to be addressed before the requirement is validated. Such as, what are the operational requirements, purpose, and mission of such a force? Is

there a current shortfall regarding the Strike Force concept within the Department of Defense in general and within in the U. S. Army in specific? Would the establishment of such a force be redundant with current Army or other service capabilities? Does the Army see itself as an anachronistic force no longer relevant in future conflict and current force structure as too rigid, thus requiring overhaul to meet the dynamic needs of emerging and future operational requirements? This monograph explores the viability of the Strike Force concept in terms of the U. S. Army's current and future mission requirements.

The evaluation criteria identified for this monograph has been designed to assess the requirement for a Strike Force capability within the U. S. Army. Specifically, evaluation criteria has been based upon data assembled from several secondary sources and includes the following:

- The current Army mission statement and functions were utilized in order to define contemporary mission requirements, organization, and service philosophy.
- The Army Universal Task List (AUTL) was utilized as evaluation criteria to determine the contemporary and future relevance of Strike Force.
- Joint Vision 2010 and Army Vision 2010 was employed to determine future mission requirements and warfighting philosophy.
- Applicable portions of the Army After Next (AAN) Project, specifically the Army's Modernization Plan with its five goals, were applied as evaluation criteria as a basis for defining and establishing future operational capabilities, and to assess the validity of the Strike Force Operational and Organizational (O&O) Concept.

- The United States Marine Corps (USMC) Standing Joint Task Force (SJTF) Headquarters concept, as defined by the Commandants Planning Guidance (CPG), to include lessons learned, were utilized as evaluation criteria in assessing the Strike Force Headquarters O&O Concept. Specifically, the Strike Force Headquarters long-term goal of establishing a Joint Task Force capability.
- The elements of Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) organization were specifically adopted during the service comparison portion in order to compare and contrast the Strike Force O&O Concept to the MAGTF.

The amount of information available regarding the Army's Strike Force Organizational and Operational Concept is limited. The controversy Strike Force has launched within the Army's ranks has resulted in restricted access to and flow of information relating to this emerging concept. Furthermore, the dynamics of this evolutionary concept have resulted in the circulation of several interpretations of the Strike Force O&O Concept throughout the Army – these interpretations have been in the form of published articles and unofficial electronic mail. Unfortunately, many of these interpretations are not only contradictory, but have further contributed to the increased polarization between Strike Force advocates and opponents. For these reasons, the research phase of this monograph (although not a limiting factor) was beset by significant challenges relating to the perishability and accuracy of information. In order to evaluate the Strike Force O&O Concept and separate truth from fiction, this monograph has utilized reference material provided by Army sources, such as; the Strike Force proponent, Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC); congressional testimony; and professional publications and news articles.

Chapter II: Strike Force Organizational and Operational Concept

What is the Strike Force Operational and Organizational Concept?

Before a determination concerning the viability of Strike Force may be made, a thorough understanding of the operational and organizational concept is necessary.

Since the end of the Cold War, United States military forces have wrestled with redefining future roles and missions. The United States Army, like many of the other services, has established force structure and doctrinal planning groups, warfighting labs, and advanced warfighting experiments in order to prepare for future contingencies involving military action.

On 10 February 1999, General Reimer, Army Chief of Staff, delivered his statement to the 106th Congress regarding the current "State of the Army." During his testimony, he devoted a considerable amount of time discussing Strike Force. General Reimer stated,

"Reducing risks to future readiness also requires making the right targeted investments now, not just in new equipment, but in the right organizations, training methods, doctrine, leadership and personnel development programs. One of the most important of our future-oriented initiatives is the upcoming Army Strike Force experiments..."⁶

In his discussion of current capabilities, General Reimer stated that the Army possesses a wide range of capabilities, which are continuously improving. However, what is required now is the ability to enhance the Army's current ability to adapt its forces in order to exploit their potential to provide "...the right combination of forces for each unique strategic requirement."⁷ The Strike Force Concept is based upon the Army's proscribed ability to organize and adapt its forces for the new global environment/threat. The Chief of Staff further stated "...under the Strike Force Concept, we will develop a system that

allows us to draw just the precise capabilities we need for a given mission and integrate them into an efficient organization that can project power quickly and conduct effective early entry contingency operations.”⁸

Furthermore, General Reimer identified three reasons for pursuing the Strike Force Concept. The first reason was to develop a rapidly deployable force suited for the type of post-cold war/post Desert Storm operations that require contingency forces that can perform peacekeeping type missions. The second reason was to include an additional battle lab in an attempt to determine the skills required by soldiers and their leaders well into the next century. The third reason was to establish a prototype organization that can be used for experimentation in order to glean lessons learned for the Army’s long-term goals as well as requirements for establishing an effective force between the years of 2010 and 2025.⁹

Recognizing the need for both operational and organizational change, the Army developed and considered eleven possible organizational designs. Each of these organizational designs was assessed (through simulation) based upon criteria such as lethality, sustainability, and survivability. This process of evaluation narrowed the eleven organizational designs to three. These three designs were further evaluated during the Task Force Advanced Warfighting Experiment (AWE), March 1997, and the Division AWE the following November. The final three organizational designs evaluated included a Strike Force design, a “Brigadist” Division, and a “Conservative Heavy” Division.¹⁰

The first organizational design incorporated a Strike Force element that consisted of a division size element that integrated a large force of helicopters. The second design was comprised of a “brigadist” division, which consisted of a discombobulated organization

of several brigades. Thirdly, a more traditional “conservative heavy” Division consisting of three maneuver brigades (one armored, two mechanized infantry) was evaluated.¹¹

Following the testing and evaluation of each of the organizational designs, Strike Force possessed the greatest lethality as well as the second highest survivability rate; unfortunately, it also had the highest price tag, estimated at approximately 1.1 billion dollars.¹² The brigadier division offered the lowest level of lethality and survivability; although brigades did fight better as independent units against small enemy/threat forces, they did not do well collectively against large adversaries. Due to the high cost associated with Strike Force, the Army decided to pursue the “conservative heavy division” design – though it lacked the lethality of the Strike Force – it provided the best performance regarding survivability and sustainment, and was in consonance with the Army’s long-term reorganization and modernization plans.¹³

Despite the deliberate process of determining how the Army must be organized, as well as the decision to pursue the “conservative heavy division” organization, General Hartzog, the former TRADOC Commander, stated the Army’s organizational structure is “...not strategically relevant for 21st century.”¹⁴ He reiterated the necessity for the Army to transform “...itself into a more mobile and faster force by cutting back on its heavy divisions. The heavy armor units must become more agile and more annihilating.” General Hartzog believes a change is necessary as future wars/conflict will be “unforgiving to leaden-footed forces,” and that the time to begin change is now, between the years 2000-2010.¹⁵

General Hartzog has not been the only senior Army officer to embrace the Strike Force concept and the need for change. During February 1999, General Reimer

commented to Army Times during an Association of the U. S. Army conference, the need for change. He stated, "...We have a ...force structure that was built to win the Cold War...it doesn't always lend itself to packages that are deployable and employable in the post Cold-War world." He went on to state that the Army is actively looking for new missions in the post-cold war environment and that Strike Force has been developed based on the immediate needs of the CINCs for a capability to rapidly deploy a force that can perform support and stability operations.¹⁶ This is not to imply however, that the Army does not currently have a rapid response capability, for it does – that being the division ready brigades – each force consisting of between 3,000 to 5,000 troops. It is this size force that General Hartzog would like to see assume the role of Strike Force – a specifically task organized force capable of arriving within theater in approximately five days or less.¹⁷

According to General Hartzog, Strike Force would essentially be an enabling force – establishing the conditions in which follow-on forces would arrive and deploy. Follow-on forces would consist of either light or heavy contingency forces depending upon the situation and mission requirements. General Hartzog also identified the force, which he considered the best suited for designation as the Army's Strike Force – the 2nd ACR, located at Fort Polk, Louisiana. As the Strike Force element, the 2nd ACR would become the test/experimentation unit for future Strike Force development.¹⁸

Having introduced the initial Strike Force O&O Concept to Army leaders, General Hartzog relinquished command of TRADOC to General Abrams during the summer of 1998. After General Abrams assumed command of TRADOC, he has continued to

define and refine the Strike Force O&O Concept, which is presently being staffed and coordinated through TRADOC's Commanding General Planning Group.¹⁹

Until this point, particular information about Strike Force has been somewhat conceptual, lacking specificity. The discussion must now focus more upon the specific details associated with this concept.

A recent TRADOC draft PowerPoint® presentation identifies the mission of Strike Force as follows.

"Strike Force is capable of rapidly responding anywhere on the globe with a tailored, lethal, and mobile combat, combat support, and combat service support force package. It is designed to conduct offensive, defensive, retrograde, stability, and support actions in early entry, peacekeeping, and crisis deterrence/ containment. The Strike Force conducts simultaneous distributed operations by employing the full range of Army military forces, as well as Joint and interagency capabilities, employing superior situational awareness to gain operationally significant objectives. The Strike Force can also conduct high-end decisive operations and humanitarian assistance when properly resourced."²⁰

Specific data regarding Strike Force capabilities are further addressed within the TRADOC O&O Concept working papers, and include several capabilities worthy of discussion.

First, Strike Force will be organized into tailored force packages in order to conduct offensive, defensive, support and/or stability type operations.²¹ The combat, combat support, and combat service support elements of Strike Force will be specifically organized for each contingency based upon the mission, enemy, terrain, troops available, time, and civil considerations (METT-TC). Units assigned to Strike Force will be sourced from commands throughout the entire Army. Units comprising Strike Force will be globally sourced and tasked based upon METT-TC; and Strike Force elements will

include forces from both the Active Component (AC) and Reserve Component (RC).²²

Other characteristics of Strike Force include:

- Force tailored packages ultimately capable of employing a full range of military operations (ODSS) which will be capable of employing "...heavy/light, digital/analog, combat/CS/CSS, Army/Joint, US/Multinational, and Active/Reserve forces."²³ The term "ultimately" is used because a recent statement by General Reimer indicated that Strike Force will initially conduct only support and stability type operations and not be employed to conduct decisive combat operations until the final stage of Strike Force implementation.²⁴
- Conducting "...high tempo operations, employing maneuver and precision fires to defeat critical enemy systems."²⁵
- Specific Strike Force Capabilities will be in compliance with the Army's Universal Task List (AUTL) to include: Deploy and Conduct Maneuver; Develop Intelligence; Employ Firepower; Perform Logistics and CSS; Protect the Force; and Exercise Command and Control.²⁶
- Deployable via both strategic air/sealift and/or theater airlift.²⁷
- Consist of approximately 5000 soldiers, more if required.²⁸
- A customized command and control capability that establishes the necessary liaison teams for higher and adjacent headquarters elements, both U. S. and multinational.²⁹
- Operate as a subordinate element of a Joint Task Force or Corps.³⁰
- Command and Control will possess a global reach-back capability to the JTF or Corps headquarters as necessary.³¹

- Establish a habitual relationship with force providers and conducts training as necessary in order to maintain a core competency during peacetime. This will permit the ability to "...compress [the]...teaming process during crisis."³²
- Possess a self-sustaining capability of at least 72-96 hours.³³

Another characteristic of Strike Force concerns leadership. "Strike Force is a flexible and agile organization enabled by adaptive leaders." Leadership requirements of Strike Force include the ability to rapidly adjust to changing situations, assess competing priorities and resolve issues at the lowest possible level in order to fulfill the commander's intent, and articulate critical and perishable information in an understandable, succinct, and prompt manner. Furthermore, leaders must act as problem solvers and mentors for subordinates.³⁴ Strike Force command requirements can be defined as "A complex organization designed to operate in a complex environment..." which "...requires a...commander who routinely practices both 'direct' and 'organizational' leadership...and is supported by...a flexible, versatile staff whose method of operation can be adapted based on the uncertainty and complexity of the operational environment."³⁵

In addition to the above description, additional Strike Force information was provided during a recent TRADOC presentation. The briefing was conducted at the U. S. Army's School of Advanced Military Studies, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and provided an in-depth forum and discussion that further emphasized the Strike Force concept. During the briefing, the TRADOC official stated the purpose of Strike Force was to move away from specialization, such as, heavy-mechanization and light infantry to "projecting a smaller, faster, and more lethal force...while creating a more agile force with what we currently

have.”³⁶ He also stated that Strike Force has the characteristics of a “General Purpose Capability” that consists of the following core features:

- Rapidly deployable, within 96 hours or less.
- Lethal, relying on the latest in weapons and command and control technology.
- Modular (core capabilities/tactical tailoring/global sourcing from across the entire Army [need a full range of platforms]). Modular/force tailoring that is rapidly deployable (sourcing capability on a global perspective) for operations in order to achieve asymmetrical advantage.
- Mobile (Possible future procurement of Light Armored Vehicles (LAVs) and its variants).
- Sustainable for a limited period/duration.
- Enhanced combined arms capability.
- Survivable.³⁷

In establishing an interim Strike Force capability, TRADOC articulated that units must have the following characteristics:

- Enhanced unit cohesion.
- The ability to plan for and execute simultaneous operations (similar to the Marine Corps “Three-block war” concept in which the future operational environment will require an adaptive and flexible force that can fight conventionally, conduct peacekeeping, and humanitarian type operations all within a three city block area).³⁸
- A reduction in lift requirement.
- Possesses speed and agility.³⁹

Consistent with General Hartzog's vision and with the above characteristics in mind, the 2nd ACR has been identified as the core unit to stand-up Strike Force. Why the 2nd ACR? According to TRADOC, the 2nd ACR's proximity to the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) at Fort Polk, Louisiana offers the best full-spectrum training environment/capability. Furthermore, a recent simulated exercise, conducted from 2-11 November 1998 at Fort Knox, Kentucky in order to evaluate the viability of the Strike Force Concept, provides more justification for designation of the 2nd ACR as the initial Strike Force organization. Results of the exercise indicated that Strike Force would be more flexible if given additional combined arms systems/units, full reconnaissance and surveillance capabilities, medium armored vehicles with LOS and non-LOS missile systems, and CAS provided by the Air Force.⁴⁰ The 2nd ACR provides the force capability of tactical mobility, that consisting of two specific criteria: air deployability as a unit, and "Air Mechanization."⁴¹ What is the meaning of "air mechanization?" The TRADOC official conducting the presentation defined "air mechanization" as the establishment of an air/ground combined arms team. Presently this capability currently exists below the division level only within the 2nd ACR.⁴²

How will Strike Force be Implemented?

The Army plans to develop and implement Strike Force as a three step strategy/process.

Step one currently in progress, is referred to as the "Entry Stage." This stage focuses upon validating the concept and conducting experimentation with the command and control headquarters element/structure of Strike Force.⁴³

Step two is the “Interim Stage” and covers the period from the “Entry Stage” to threshold, which will be 1999-2005. The “Interim Stage” will continue with experimentation and will include the validation of doctrine, equipment, and tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTP). The ultimate goal of this stage is to identify technologies required and establish a Program Objective Memorandum (POM) to fully stand-up the Strike Force capability by 2005.⁴⁴

Step three encompasses the “Objective Capabilities Fielding Stage” and implementation of the Strike Force Concept throughout the Army (global sourcing) beginning in the year 2005.⁴⁵

During the course of the question-and-answer period of TRADOC’s presentation, one question focused upon whether the Strike Force headquarters would function as a Joint Task Force (JTF). TRADOC believed that the Strike Force headquarters would not, at least initially, focus upon performing the functions of a JTF, but rather would be oriented at the Army Forces (ARFOR) and Land Component Commander (LCC) level with Army tactical (TAC) operations embedded. TRADOC was very clear in that the unified Commander in Chiefs (CINCs) would be the drivers of what they want out of JTFs. Currently, they are not asking for a JTF headquarters capability resident within the Army’s Strike Force O&O Concept.⁴⁶

Based upon the background information to date, the primary themes that can be extrapolated from the Strike Force Organizational and Operational Concept are as follows. First, the Army must change how it is organized in order to keep pace with the future dynamics of the operational environment. Secondly, the Army will achieve these

organizational changes through global force tailoring and rapid force projection
(completing the transition from a forward presence Army to one of force projection).

As such, Strike Force therefore consists of the following primary characteristics:

- A medium-weight force to bridge the current gap in warfighting capability.
- A globally sourced, task organized force designed to meet the mission requirements dictated by METT-TC.

Having discussed the capabilities of Strike Force, it is now necessary to determine its viability. To do so, an examination of the Army's current, and future, roles and missions is essential.

Chapter III: Strike Force vs. Current U. S. Army Capabilities

To determine the viability and future potential of the Strike Force O&O Concept, it is important to first compare differences between today's Army and Strike Force. What are the similarities and differences? Does Strike Force fall within the definition and limits of current Army capabilities or does it pose a radical change in warfighting philosophy and organization? To determine the answers to these questions, it is necessary to begin with a brief discussion of the Army's mission and warfighting philosophy, how it is organized for current operations, and its capabilities as a force projection Army.

Current Mission and Functions of the Army

The mission of the United States Army states:

“...to preserve the peace and security, and provide for the defense of the United States, the Territories, Commonwealths, and Possessions, and any areas occupied by the United States; to support national policies; to implement national objectives; and, to overcome any nations responsible for aggressive acts that imperil the peace and security of the United States.”⁴⁷

In order to accomplish its mission, the Army must perform three primary functions.

The first function “...to organize, train, and equip forces for the conduct of prompt and sustained combat operations on land – specifically, forces to defeat enemy land forces and to seize, occupy, and defend land areas.”

The second function “...to organize, train, and equip forces for appropriate air and missile defense and space control operations, including provision of forces as required for the strategic defense of the United States, in accordance with joint doctrines.”

The third and final function “...to organize, equip, and provide Army forces, in coordination with other Military Services, for joint amphibious, airborne, and space

operations and to provide for the training of such forces, in accordance with joint doctrines.”⁴⁸

For the Army to perform these functions and accomplish their mission, it must be properly organized and equipped to fight. Currently, conventional forces within today’s Army are organized into a total of ten heavy divisions, six within the active duty component and four within the Army National Guard. The Army National Guard is organized with seven “heavy enhanced Separate Brigades (eSB)” and one Armored Cavalry Regiment. The Army’s light infantry forces consist of four divisions within the active component and one light division within the Army National Guard, to include seven “light enhanced Separate Brigades.”⁴⁹ In addition to the combat forces, listed above, an appropriate level of combat support and combat service support slice elements are dedicated within each corps and division. General Hartzog’s comment mentioned in Chapter Two regarding the “over-specialization” of current organizational structure, is evident.

Doctrinal Warfighting Philosophy

At the core of the Army’s warfighting philosophy is Air-Land Battle Doctrine – a doctrine that standardizes how the Army wages war as a combined arms team. The Army’s warfighting philosophy is to fight and win the nation’s wars. To do so, they plan and execute military operations and operations other than war at both the operational and tactical levels. Focusing on the tactical level, “...success comes from the aggressive, intelligent, and decisive use of combat power in an environment of uncertainty, chaos, violence, and danger and often in the face of paralyzing fear and fatigue. Although two units may have equal combat potential, the commander who employs the better tactics

who has the stronger will and resistance to uncertainty has a distinct advantage.”⁵⁰ For the commander to defeat an adversary, he must “seize, retain, and exploit the initiative” by out maneuvering and gaining positional superiority over the enemy. This is accomplished through the employment of combined arms weapons which not only assist the commander’s ability to maneuver before, during and after he has engaged the enemy, but prohibits the enemy from fighting as a combined arms team.⁵¹ Clearly, the Army’s primary focus is upon the conventional form (offense/defense) of warfare. Obviously, after centuries of fighting wars in the traditional sense, it is this environment which not only is the hallmark of Army warfighting philosophy, but defines its comfort zone as well. With these precepts in mind, let us now concentrate upon the Army’s current capabilities.

Current Army Capabilities

“The Army’s fundamental capability, its unique contribution to joint military operations, is the exercise of comprehensive and continuous control over people, land, and resources. Our soldiers and leaders, and those who support them, are prepared to conduct prompt and sustained operations throughout the spectrum of military operations in any environment that requires land forces. The Army is therefore the force of choice to support peace, to deter war, and to compel enemies in defense of the interests of the United States. The Army is the central element of our Nation’s military readiness: a full spectrum force of decision.”⁵²

It is recognized that the United States Army must be prepared and ready to fight, and win, its nation’s wars, both within a mid- and high-intensity environment – an environment for which the Army is currently well organized and trained. Even though the United States must maintain a military force ready and prepared to deal with the mid-to high- intensity threat such as North Korea or Iraq, each of the armed services must also be prepared to conduct operations other than war (OOTW, which is analogous to support

and stability operations).⁵³ Finding the time and resources available to train for the full-spectrum of military operations poses a significant problem, but also merely arriving at the geographic location itself can be a great challenge. As such, responsiveness is key to successful military operations, therefore, it "...must be assessed in terms of our ability to shape the international environment."⁵⁴ A detailed discussion of the Army's current combat readiness is beyond the scope of this monograph, for clearly there are several associated challenges. As a result, the determination of the viability of Strike Force and its comparison with the Army's current capabilities, comparisons must concentrate on readiness. Within the context of this monograph, readiness is defined in terms of the capability to rapidly respond (within 96 hours) to crisis, project power, and perform tasks in compliance with the Army Universal Task List.

According to the United States Army Posture Statement Fiscal Year 2000, to be responsive domestically as well as internationally, the Nation's military "...must maintain enough forces to make trained and ready units available for deployment on short notice, sufficient strategic air and sealift to project power rapidly, and ample forward positioned forces and pre-positioned assets to cut down deployment times for initial response forces."⁵⁵

Responsiveness is therefore linked to the ability to project power. What is the Army's current timeline for power projection? The answer to that question lies within the Army's Global Pre-positioning Strategy, which provides the rapid deployment capability in projecting...forces.⁵⁶ The Army's power projection strategy states "Current contingency plans require mobility support to deploy three divisions into a theater of operations within 30 days of notification, with another two divisions plus sustainment

arriving in the next 45 days.”⁵⁷ Additionally, the Army has undertaken significant measures to increase its strategic mobility by developing the Army’s Strategic Mobility Program – a program designed to increase the Army’s force projection capability.⁵⁸

The issue of responsiveness is critical to the XVIII Airborne Corps whose mission is “to maintain … a strategic crisis response force, manned and trained to deploy rapidly by air, sea and land anywhere in the world, prepared to fight upon arrival and win.”⁵⁹ A contemporary example of response time, a Division Ready Brigade of the XVIII Airborne Corps has demonstrated its ability to rapidly deploy and assume a ready posture within 96 hours. This was accomplished February 1998, when the 1st Brigade of the 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized) deployed to Kuwait following Iraq’s refusal to comply with United Nations weapons inspectors. Movement was accomplished via strategic airlift, the brigade arrived and relied upon pre-positioned equipment.⁶⁰

Another critical factor in the establishment and maintenance of a capable Army, is the method by which it determines the operational tasks that it must perform in order to accomplish its mission. The Army has accomplished this through the development of the Army Universal Task List (AUTL) – a menu of tasks fully nested and in compliance with the Universal Joint Task List (UJTL), which is used by joint force commanders in establishing their Joint Mission Essential Task List (JMEL).⁶¹ Army doctrine stipulates:

“To accomplish the purposes of the tactical framework (decisive, shaping and sustainment operations) the tactical commander must execute the tactical tasks of the Army Universal Task List. The tactical tasks of the AUTL are an evolution of the Army battlefield operating systems (BOS). The tactical tasks are recognized by the joint community and provide a linkage to how the other services operate during tactical operations.”⁶²

The Army’s six AUTL Top-Tier Tasks constitute a portion of the evaluation criteria for the Strike Force O&O Concept, and are described as follows:

- Deploy/Conduct Maneuver (Army Tactical Task 1).⁶³ “To move forces to achieve a position of advantage with respect to enemy forces.” This task involves the employment of forces, using both direct and indirect fire support systems, in order to gain a positional advantage over an adversary. “Maneuver is the dynamic element of combat, the means of concentrating forces at the decisive point to achieve surprise, psychological shock, physical momentum, and moral dominance, which enables smaller forces to defeat larger ones.” This task also includes the movement of all forces other than combat forces – CS and CSS.⁶⁴
- Develop Intelligence (Army Tactical Task 2). This is a requirement in order to plan for and conduct tactical operations. “It is derived by analyzing the enemy’s capabilities, intentions, vulnerabilities, and the environment.”⁶⁵
- Employ Firepower (Army Tactical Task 3). Involves the application of fires against enemy air, ground, and sea targets. This task includes indirect fires such as artillery, mortar and other non line-of-sight fires, and direct fires consisting of Naval Surface Fire Support (NSFS), close air support (CAS), and electronic attack (EA) – both lethal and non-lethal fires.⁶⁶
- Perform Logistics and Combat Service Support (Army Tactical Task 4). “To sustain forces in the combat zone by arming, fueling, fixing equipment, moving, supplying, and manning, and by providing personnel and health services. Includes support, as necessary, to U. S. agencies and friendly nations or groups, non-governmental organizations (NGOs).⁶⁷
- Exercise Command and Control (Army Tactical Task 5). This task describes the method in which commanders exercise command and control over personnel,

equipment, communications, facilities, and procedures in order to integrate and control forces for military operations.⁶⁸

- Protect the Force (Army Tactical Task 6). “To protect the tactical force’s fighting potential so that it can be applied at the appropriate time and place. This task includes those measures the force takes to remain viable and functional by protecting itself from the effects of or recovery from enemy activities and natural occurrences.”⁶⁹

Having briefly discussed the Army’s current mission, functions, organization, and capabilities (in terms of responsiveness, force projection, and AUTL), let us now consider how these relate to the Strike Force O&O Concept.

As discussed within Chapter II, the mission of the Army’s Strike Force is to be capable of:

“...rapidly responding anywhere on the globe with a tailored, lethal, and mobile combat, combat support, and combat service support force package. It is designed to conduct offensive, defensive, retrograde, stability, and support actions in early entry, peace keeping, and crisis deterrence/containment. The Strike Force conducts simultaneous distributed operations by employing the full range of Army military forces, as well as Joint and interagency capabilities, employing superior situational awareness to gain operationally significant objectives. The Strike Force can also conduct high-end decisive operations and humanitarian assistance when properly resourced.”

What does this mission statement really declare? First it states that Strike Force must be responsive – 96 hours based upon the O&O Concept. Second, it will be force tailored with combat, combat support, and combat service support assets, METT-TC dependent. Third, it can respond to the full spectrum of military operations; that being offensive, defensive, support and stability operations. Fourth, Strike Force can conduct simultaneous operations in a joint and multinational environment. Fifth, the latest in

technology will be employed to provide the commander with the situational awareness he needs to accomplish his assigned mission.

By breaking down the Strike Force mission, it becomes obvious how it relates to the Army's current mission, functions, and force projection capabilities. The following matrix provides a graphic illustration from which it is possible to draw several conclusions.

Mission, Functions, & Capabilities	Current Army Capabilities	Strike Force Capabilities
Responsive Deployment (96 Hours) Bde Size Element (5K)	Yes	Yes
Relies on Pre-positioned Equipment	Yes	No****
Globally Force Tailored/Task Organized Based Upon METT-TC	No*	Yes**
Full Spectrum Operations Offensive, Defensive, Support, & Stability	No*****	Yes
Simultaneous Joint & Multinational Operations	Yes	Yes
Digitized/Analog C2 Capability	Yes***	Yes
Army Universal Task List	Yes	Yes

*Currently, Army forces are normally task-organized (units resourced) within the Corps or Division that has been tasked with a specific mission/contingency.

**Strike Force relies upon force tailoring its elements by global sourcing – drawing upon the entire Army's resources and not restricting task organization within a single corps or division.

***The Army possesses a long-term plan to digitize its forces, therefore not all units are digitized. Currently the 4th Infantry Division at Fort Hood, Texas employs a digitized capability and will be completely digitized by 2000. The Army plans to digitize 1st Cavalry Division by the end of 2003, and III Corps by 2004, will be the first digitized corps.⁷⁰

****Although Strike Force could rely upon pre-positioned assets to support an initial size force (5K), it is being designed to deploy as a complete package.

*****The Army is currently conducting support and stability type operations; however, its current organizational structure is not **optimally configured** for such operations. The primary focus of current Army capabilities is offensive and defensive conventional type operations, emphasizing upon decisive combat. Current Army structure is still largely based upon a Cold War, forward deployed threat.⁷¹

In addition to the comparisons illustrated by mission, function, and capability, an area of major similarity is Strike Force's compliance to the Army Universal Task List.

Strike Force's Compliance to the Army Universal Task List

Although the Strike Force O&O Concept is still under development, the headquarters O&O concept for Strike Force has incorporated the same AUTL and is briefly discussed below.

In relation to the conduct of operational movement and maneuver (Army Tactical Task 1), the Strike Force headquarters element is designed to provide command and control of its subordinate elements throughout the full spectrum of conflict, that being Offense, Defense, Support, and Stability (ODSS) operations. Furthermore, the Strike Force headquarters will provide command and control as both an autonomous force or possibly as an element within a larger organization.⁷²

In order to meet the requirement concerning operational intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) (Army Tactical Task 2), the Strike Force headquarters is structured to receive, analyze and promulgate intelligence products. In order to execute this capability, the Strike Force headquarters element will be linked and integrated into "national, theater, and joint ISR systems."⁷³

The Strike Force headquarters element is designed to meet the requirements of Army Tactical Task 3, employment of operational firepower. Strike Force will accomplish this task through its robust and “state-of-the-art communications system and operational situational awareness.”⁷⁴ Training to this task will facilitate the planning and execution of integrating both direct and indirect fire support weapons systems, thereby achieving combined arms effects against an adversary.

To ensure the sustainment of Strike Force elements, Army Tactical Task 4, performing logistics and combat service support, will be employed. Strike Force will possess not only a self-sustaining logistics capability from 72 to 96 hours, but will also be specifically task organized to meet all logistical needs of the force.

To meet the requirement of Army Tactical Task 5, exercising operational command and control, the Strike Force headquarters element and communications system/network will provide the command and control to effectively employ its attached/assigned units while simultaneously “conducting operational movement, maneuver, fires, and support.” Additionally, the Strike Force headquarters capability will include the command and control of joint and multinational forces that may be assigned to it.⁷⁵

Regarding the AUTL requirement to provide operational protection (Army Tactical Task 6), the Strike Force headquarters element is structured to provide the command and control to achieve the full spectrum of operational force protection. This includes, but is not limited to, the integration of units for specific capabilities such as self-defense, air defense, and NBC.⁷⁶

With each Army Tactical Task establishing the basis for functions to be performed by the combat, combat support, and combat service support elements of Strike Force, it will

no doubt be in compliance with the Army's Universal Task List. This will ensure not only to standardize capabilities within the Army, but also within the joint community.

In comparison between the mission and capabilities of the Strike Force O&O Concept and that of the Army's, it is apparent that the major differences involve:

- How the Army currently conducts force tailoring/task organization.
- The fact that today's Army is largely organized as a forward-deployed force designed primarily for conventional warfare and not optimized (organizationally) for support and stability missions.
- That from a force projection standpoint, today's Army is extremely dependent upon pre-positioned equipment.

Although the endstate of both mission statements are the same – decisive victory over any opponent and the successful accomplishment of missions throughout the full spectrum of conflict in any (ODSS) environment – the Strike Force concept focuses upon fighting smarter, not harder.

Having compared the Strike Force O&O Concept with current Army Capabilities, it is now important to relate it with the Army's vision.

Chapter IV: The Future of Army/Joint Operations

Joint and Army Vision Statements

Joint Vision 2010 and Army Vision 2010 both articulate the future direction for joint and Army service components. The goal of these vision statements is to ensure the United States will possess a relevant military capability well into the next century. This chapter will illustrate that the Strike Force O&O Concept integrates well into the framework of both vision statements.

Joint Vision 2010 states that the United States must continue to maintain the capability to conduct mid- and high-intensity operations and that future success is dependent upon the ability to perform the "...four operational concepts of dominant maneuver, precision engagement, full dimensional protection, and focused logistics."⁷⁷ Army Vision 2010 embraces these operational concepts and establishes six essential "patterns of operation...gaining information dominance, projecting the force, protecting the force, shaping the battlespace, decisive operations, and sustaining the force." As a result, the goal of Army Vision 2010 is to develop an Army "...capable of projecting power globally as part of the joint team and of conducting prompt and sustained operations on land throughout the full spectrum of military operations."⁷⁸ Joint Vision 2010 also states that "...both mid- and high-intensity combat operations present us with the most demanding requirements, and forces designed to meet these requirements are also capable of conducting operations in a lower intensity environment."⁷⁹ Strike Force is designed to maximize the Army's ability to accomplish missions in this "lower intensity environment" and ultimately the mid- to high-intensity arena as well.

The U. S. Army's Future Role in Combat and Operations Other Than War

The United States National Military Strategy has changed dramatically since the end of the Cold War. Whereas the Cold War created a bipolar world – a war between two superpowers – today’s global environment is much more complicated. Conflict is no longer manifested in the form of threats of thermonuclear war, but of state-sponsored genocide (ethnic cleansing), terrorism, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.⁸⁰ “Whereas we once viewed the mission of the American military largely in terms of fighting and winning mid- to high-intensity conflicts, we now find the military involved almost continuously in other types of military operations, including such missions as nation-building and peacekeeping.”⁸¹ For this reason the Army must broaden its focus from an offensive-minded conventional force to a force that is capable of functioning in several different operational environments. Strike Force advocates recognize the need to change the Army’s focus and are determined to change organizational structure, doctrine, and training. The Army of the 21st century needs to expand its current warfighting ethos from the conventional sense – offensive and defensive combat operations, with offense being the preferred form of combat – to include support and stability operations. It is the latter type of operations that will define the preponderance of future army contingencies.⁸²

To review, support operations include operations involving humanitarian efforts such as, disaster relief, drug interdiction, and military to military exchanges. Stability operations include nation building, peacekeeping, and peace enforcement.

Based upon historical trends in the United States National Security Strategy, the Army believes that past goals of this strategy will remain constant well into the 21st century.

These goals are "...to protect the lives and safety of Americans abroad; to maintain the sovereignty, political freedom, and independence of the United States, with its values, institutions, and territory intact; and, to promote the prosperity and well-being of the Nation and its people."⁸³

With the United States National Security Strategy remaining essentially a constant, the Army must focus upon executing the National Military Strategy while taking into account the dynamics of the geo-political environment. As such, the strategy for the future is accomplished through two major programs; Force XXI and the Army's Modernization Plan – both of which contribute to the long term project of Army After Next (AAN).

The Army's Force XXI and Modernization Plan both play a major role in the future development of the Army. Force XXI is the Army's mechanism for building an information-age Army; it is also the method by which the Army can test new and innovative concepts. The Army accomplishes this through the Advanced Warfighter Experiments (AWE).⁸⁴ Additionally, "Force XXI provides the experimental data needed to maintain the most capable land combat force in the world." It is a process of compressing the equipment and systems developmental cycle as well as a means to synchronize the six operational imperatives (information dominance, projecting the force, protecting the force, shaping the battlespace, decisive operations, and sustaining the force).⁸⁵

Does the U. S. Army/Joint Service Doctrine Establish the Need for a Strike Force?

Key to Force XXI is the Army Experimentation Campaign Plan (AECP).⁸⁶ The AECP is the future road map for the conduct of AWEs that support the various phases of the Force XXI process. The Army's current Fiscal Year 2000 (FY-00) posture statement

identifies three distinct directions concerning future organizational strategies that are designed to meet the demand of operational requirements. Of the three organizational proposals, one is directly related to Strike Force. These organizational designs include a Mechanized Contingency Force, a Light Contingency Force, and a Strike Force. The Mechanized Contingency Force (MCF) is a heavy force designed for high-intensity combat operations. The Light Contingency Force (LCF) is a forcible entry force, that is organized for units to fight their way into a theater of operations by seizing ports, airfields, and other areas.⁸⁷ The third operational design outlined within the Army's FY-00 posture statement is Strike Force.

The Posture Statement stipulates that:

"The Strike Force axis will lead to the development of a highly deployable, agile, lethal, and survivable middleweight force. Strike Force will provide a bridge between early-entry light forces and slower-to-arrive mechanized forces, combining the strengths of both heavy and light forces in a rapidly deployable configuration able to enhance early-entry operations as well as operate in urban and restrictive terrain. Initially, it will be command and control headquarters that can assimilate light, airborne, air assault, mechanized, and motorized joint and combined forces to create a tailored force package for entry operations. This Strike Force headquarters will participate in the Joint Contingency Force (JCF) AWE" during September 2000.⁸⁸

Clearly, the Strike Force O&O Concept has received a great deal of attention by the senior leadership of the Army. The concept's announcement within the FY-00 Posture Statement is a major step in the official acknowledgement of the concept's existence, and was presented to the Committees and Subcommittees of the United States Senate and the House of Representatives.⁸⁹

The Army After Next Project will consist of the final results of efforts taken through the actions associated with Force XXI and the Army Experimentation Campaign Plan.

"The project examines a wide range of areas, including the future strategic setting, force projection concepts, the use of AAN-era forces in urban and complex terrain, AC/RC integration, the role of the Army in homeland defense, the nature of future joint and coalition operations, and the identification of promising technologies."⁹⁰

Key to the AAN Project is the Army Modernization Plan and its five goals (evaluation criteria):

- Digitize the Army
- Maintain Combat Overmatch
- Sustain Essential Research and Development and Focus Science and Technology to Leap-Ahead Technologies
- Re-capitalize the Force
- Integrate the AC and RC.⁹¹

The Strike Force O&O Concept integrates each and every one of these goals.

Specifically, Strike Force will:

- Utilize digital technology in order to compress decision-making cycles by maintaining near real and real time situational awareness. The result will be enhanced command and control of operating forces, integration with joint and multinational forces, and reach-back capability to name a few.
- Maintain combat overmatch through its ability to leverage technology, fight as a combined arms team, and most importantly by force tailoring Strike Force based upon METT-TC.
- Fulfill its role in the Army's Modernization Plan in the area of Research and Development and focus on leap-ahead technologies through its participation in

future Advanced Warfighter Experiments, such as the Joint Contingency Force Experiment.

- Re-capitalization of the force will be through the replacement of older systems with newer, more capable systems that will focus on establishing a force projection capability that will bridge the gap between current heavy forces and light forces.
- Through Strike Force's concept of force tailoring and drawing on all Army forces to include the Reserve Component, it will meet the Modernization Plan of integrating the AC and RC.

Having completed the discussion of the Strike Force O&O Concept and its comparison to the Army's current mission, functions, and capabilities, to include its future vision, it is now time to contemplate the concept in terms of organization. To facilitate this process, several comparisons between Strike Force and another service component, the United States Marine Corps, will yield numerous similarities and lessons learned which Strike Force planners must exploit.

Chapter V: Strike Force & USMC

The Strike Force Organization – Marine Corps Connection

Having studied the Strike Force O&O Concept, one of the initial thoughts entertained by the author, was its similarity to the Marine Corps' method of organizing forces for military operations. In addition to organizational similarities, another parallel may be established between the Strike Force Headquarters O&O Concept and the Marine Corps recent attempt at the establishment of a Standing Joint Task Force (SJTF) Headquarters, which has been identified as a possible long-term goal of the concept. To illustrate these similarities, a brief discussion of how the Marine Corps organizes for operations as well as its recent attempt at establishing a SJTF Headquarters will be pursued.

A recent article within the Marine Corps Times draws a comparison between Army efforts at establishing a Strike Force capability and the method by which the Marine Corps organizes for military operations. General Krulak, the Commandant of the Marine Corps argues, that the Strike Force Concept when fully implemented is too redundant to the Marine Corps mission, and that "...this nation can't afford redundancy or duplication."⁹² General Reimer, Army Chief of Staff debates that as Strike Force will not possess a forcible entry capability (at least within the early phases of development), it will not be redundant to the Marine Corps, or for that matter other forces within the Army, such as the XVIII Airborne Corps.⁹³ Although the Army does not state that it is using the Marine Corps as a benchmark for the establishment of Strike Force, there are multiple characteristics common to both.

With the Marine Air-Ground Task Force concept serving as the foundation in which the Marine Corps organizes for combat, it will serve as an additional method of

evaluation of the Strike Force O&O Concept, specifically, how the Army intends to organize its forces for Strike Force operations.

The Marine Corps recognizes that most military organizations, such as the U. S. Army, are standing organizations established primarily for specific type missions, and although they may task organize for various types of operations, the level of cross-attachment is usually within a single corps or division. It is when these types of organizations “globally” resource units and establish a command relationship that has never habitually existed, that the organization tends to experience a loss of effectiveness.⁹⁴

The MAGTF

The Marine Corps’ genesis for warfighting is captured within the Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication (MCDP) 1, Warfighting. This capstone document establishes the philosophy of how Marine forces organize for combat and contingency operations. Chapter 3, “Preparing for War,” states...

“For operations and training, Marine forces will be formed into Marine air-ground task forces (MAGTFs). MAGTFs are task organizations consisting of ground, aviation, combat service support, and command elements. **They have no standard structure, but rather are constituted as appropriate for the specific situation.** The MAGTF provides a single commander a combined arms force that can be tailored to the situation faced. As the situation changes, it may of course be necessary to restructure the MAGTF.”⁹⁵

MAGTFs are “general-purpose air-ground-logistics forces that can be tailored to the requirements of a specific mission.” In other words, it is build as a “modular organization.”⁹⁶ The MAGTF is capable of accomplishing the full spectrum of military operations ranging from high-intensity conflict to mid- and low-intensity missions such

as peacekeeping and humanitarian operations.⁹⁷ The four elements of the MAGTF: command, ground, air, and combat service support are described as follows.

The **command element** (CE) provides the command and control for the planning and execution of all operations. Unlike the other elements of the MAGTF, it is normally a permanent standing headquarters. The command element contains units that provide administrative, communications and intelligence support to the MAGTF.⁹⁸

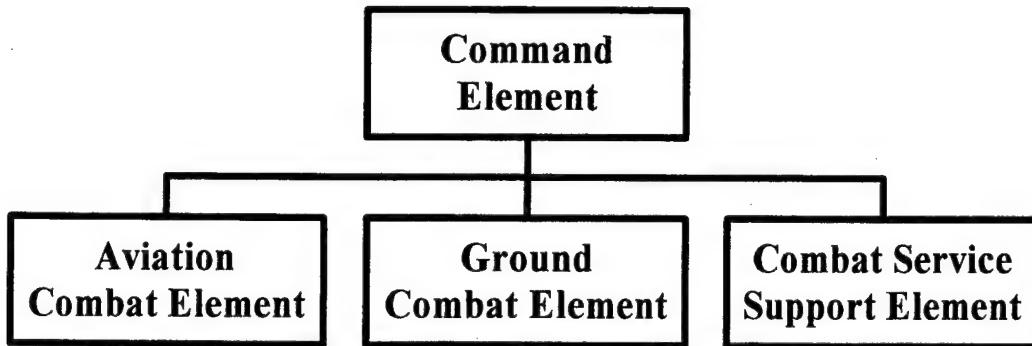
Built around an infantry unit, the **ground combat element** (GCE) consists of additional combat arms units such as, artillery, armor, amphibious tractors, combat engineer, reconnaissance, and other forces as necessary (such as air defense). “The ground combat element may range from a light, air-transportable unit to one that is relatively heavy and mechanized.” The size of force can range from a reinforced battalion to multiple infantry divisions.⁹⁹

The **aviation combat element** (ACE) is task organized in order to provide all or a portion of the six functions of Marine aviation (Anti-air Warfare [counter-air], offensive air support [Strategic Attack, Air Interdiction, and CAS], assault support [C-130 transport, and helicopter attack/lift], air reconnaissance, electronic warfare, and the control of aircraft and missiles [aviation command and control]). The size of force can range from an aviation detachment to multiple aircraft wings.¹⁰⁰

The **combat service support element** (CSSE) is task organized and can provide a complete range of support functions depending on the mission and size and scope of operation. It can range in size from a CSS detachment to multiple field service support groups.¹⁰¹

This chart depicts the organizational structure of the MAGTF.¹⁰²

Structure of the MAGTF



There are three primary types of MAGTFs; the Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF), the Special Purpose MAGTF (SPMAGTF), and the Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) (MEU(SOC)).

The MEF is the largest of the Marine Corps warfighting organizations and is deployed for large-scale crisis situations. It consists of a standing headquarters along with one infantry division, one aircraft wing, and one field service support group; however, it may be task organized with additional assets from the Marine Corps or other services as necessary. It deploys with a 60-day self-sustainment capability.¹⁰³

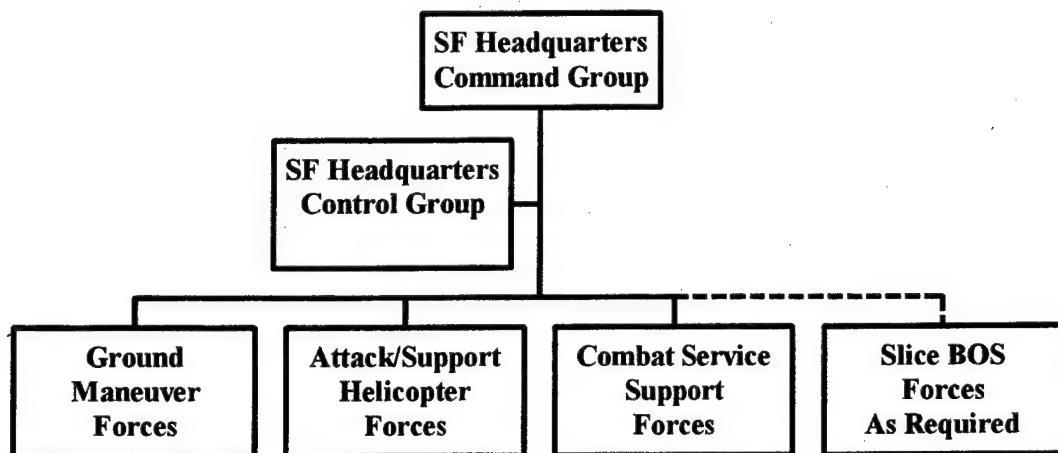
The SPMAGTF is unique from the other two types of MAGTFs in that it is established for a specific mission that is limited in terms of its purpose and duration. Unlike the other MAGTFs, the SPMAGTF does not normally possess a standing command element (however it could be created from one), but is established and task-organized specifically for the mission at hand.¹⁰⁴ Additionally, the GCE, ACE, and CSSE are specifically task organized as well. At the conclusion of operations, it is

dissolved, similar to that of a JTF. SPMAGTF missions normally consist of low-intensity operations and include "raids, peacekeeping, noncombatant evacuation, disaster relief, and humanitarian assistance."¹⁰⁵

The MEU(SOC) is the Marine Corps standard forward-deployed sea-based expeditionary force. It possesses a limited amount of combat power and consists of a reinforced infantry battalion, a reinforced helicopter squadron (attack, medium and heavy lift) to include the AV-8B Harrier, and a task organized combat service support element. It deploys with a 15-day sustainment package. MEU(SOC) missions normally include "demolition operations, clandestine reconnaissance and surveillance, raids, [noncombatant evacuations] and in-extremis hostage recovery."¹⁰⁶

The Strike Force O&O concept is nearly identical to the MAGTF for several reasons. From an organizational standpoint, Strike Force is organized with a headquarters command element, a ground maneuver force, an attack/lift helicopter force, and a combat service support force. The chart below illustrates the Strike Force organization.

Structure of Strike Force



Although the headquarters element of Strike Force is broken down into a command group and a control group, from a functionality standpoint, both groups are envisioned to operate in the same capacity as the MAGTF command element.

Specific comparisons between Strike Force and the MAGTF – Strike Force is nearly an identical version of the SPMAGTF – with the exception of a standing/permanent headquarters within the Strike Force. The following characteristics are common to both the MAGTF and Strike Force.

- Task organized, globally if necessary by force-tailoring/customizing each deployment specifically for the situation.
- Modular design for “plug-in” expandability.
- Established for a specific mission and duration.
- Contain a command element, ground element, air element, and CSS element (Within the MAGTF, the equivalent of Army slice elements have a specified command relationship established such as, general support, direct support, operational control, attached, etc., to one and/or all four MAGTF elements METT-TC dependent).
- Possess a self-sustaining logistics capability of limited duration.
- Rapid deployability during national or global crisis.
- Capable of integrating Active and Reserve Component forces.
- Tailored specifically to perform support and stability type operations (Strike Force initial capability).
- Emphasis upon combined arms warfare, specifically the “Air/Ground” team.

- Emphasis upon highly versatile (multi-mission capable), mobile, and lethal weapons systems.
- The shift from over-specialization to multi-capable and versatile units capable of participating in the full spectrum of future operations (i.e., the “Three-Block Battlefield”).
- Ability to deploy within 96 hours – a 911 force.

“The Marine Corps building-block approach to MAGTF organization makes reorganization a matter of routine.”¹⁰⁷ The MAGTF provides combatant commanders in chief or other operational level commanders a versatile force that is capable of responding to a wide range of crisis situations.¹⁰⁸ This is a capability that is not only embraced by Strike Force advocates, but one that Strike Force must establish to ensure success.

Comparison between the Strike Force Headquarters and the Marine Corps

Standing JTF Headquarters

As a potential long-term goal of the Strike Force Headquarters (to become a JTF), it is critical for Army leaders to consider the historical record associated with a service component’s unilateral decision to develop a Joint Task Force Headquarters. With this capability on the horizon, the Army must pursue and take advantage of a wealth of information and lessons learned. The corporate knowledge consistent with such a massive undertaking resides within the United States Marine Corps. For three years beginning in July 1995, the Marine Corps experimented with and fielded such a capability; called the “Standing Joint Task Force Headquarters.”

In Chapter II, the Strike Force O&O Concept was discussed in terms of both an overall force capability and that of the headquarters element. Research of various O&O White Papers and PowerPoint® Presentations, disclosed that many of the capabilities contained within the headquarters O&O Concept have been recently attempted by the Marine Corps. An account of these lessons learned is appropriate when considering the viability of the Strike Force Headquarters O&O Concept.

The Standing Joint Task Force (SJTF) Headquarters was the Marine Corps' attempt to remove the ad hoc nature of building the headquarters element of a JTF. The SJTF initiative was originated by General Krulak and promulgated through his "Commandant's Planning Guidance" following his assignment as Marine Corps Commandant, July 1995. The SJTF Headquarters would be expected to provide command and control for (support and stability type missions) operations ranging from humanitarian assistance to mid-intensity conflict.¹⁰⁹

The Commandants Planning Guidance provided the vision regarding the need to establish a SJTF Headquarters (ODSS mission capable). It states in part,

"The Marine Corps must provide a fully capable expeditionary Joint Task Force (JTF) Headquarters organized and equipped to move out at a moment's notice to meet the uncertainties of a chaotic New World. In concept, this would be the headquarters of choice when the National Command Authorities and the Unified Commanders in Chief are planning to respond to emerging crises anywhere in the world's littorals."¹¹⁰

The Marine Corps SJTF Headquarters was formed December 1995 at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina and would consist of "...permanently assigned personnel trained together as a viable team, and capable of progressing and improving based upon personal experience and corporate knowledge."¹¹¹

The establishment of the SJTF Headquarters was a three-phase project. Phase I was undertaken with the Commandant's Planning Guidance (CPG) directing the establishment of the SJTF Headquarters and enunciation of his goal of eliminating the ad hoc nature of establishing JTFs. Phase I ended within nine months of the CPG, with the establishment of an enabling or core SJTF headquarters, staffed and equipped solely by Marines.¹¹² Phase II of the project began with the intent of the permanent establishment of the command element of the SJTF Headquarters.

Phase II focused upon individual and staff training as well as filling the Tables of Organization and Equipment. Efforts were also underway to establish "Battle Rosters," which would be the method the SJTF would use to globally source other service staff officers until the permanent assignment of personnel could be implemented. This phase was scheduled to take approximately five months.¹¹³

Phase III planned to establish the SJTF Headquarters as a fully operational and ready to deploy JTF headquarters, complete with service component personnel and equipment.¹¹⁴

Despite the validation of the concept through several joint operations and exercises, the Marine Corps' vision of establishing the first Standing Joint Task Force was disbanded after only two and one-half years.¹¹⁵ Why was the SJTF disbanded? There were multiple reasons, to include the following:

- The concept met with skepticism from the joint community and as a result was not embraced or supported within the Department of Defense as a whole.¹¹⁶
- The SJTF lacked necessary personnel staffing by other service components.¹¹⁷

- The Marine Corps could not afford to maintain the capability without support from the joint community. The project was too expensive in terms of manpower and funding. Without support in terms of personnel, the SJTF was actually a Standing Task Force (STF) Headquarters.¹¹⁸
- Theater commanders were concerned about "...criticism if they utilized the SJTF [Headquarters] to oversee forces stationed outside their areas of responsibility."¹¹⁹
- Other service components viewed the SJTF Headquarters as a threat "...to their already reduced force levels."¹²⁰

An understanding of those failures associated with the Marine Corps attempt to establish a Standing JTF Headquarters are critical to the success of the Army's desire to develop the same capability within Strike Force. Many Army leaders have stated the same reasons for the establishment of a JTF capable Strike Force Headquarters as did the Marine Corps. A recent comment made by General Reimer to an Army Times staff writer stated that "the regional commanders in chief have told him they need to be able to call on a Strike Force-like outfit."¹²¹ It is important to understand that this comment by the regional CINCs was no doubt addressing the overall Strike Force Concept and not that of the establishment of a JTF Headquarters capability, an attitude those responsible for the establishment of the Strike Force Headquarters O&O Concept must not forget.

Chapter VI: Conclusion and Summary

Is Strike Force a Redundant Capability?

One question that will certainly be brought to the forefront as the Army's Strike Force O&O Concept evolves: Is the Strike Force O&O Concept a redundant capability? Opponents to Strike Force argue that this emerging philosophy is just hyperbolic nonsense and that the capability already exists within the Army, specifically the XVIII Airborne Corps. In other words, digitize XVIII Airborne Corps and it becomes Strike Force. These opponents are right, and wrong, concerning redundancy since some of its characteristics do exist, many however do not. Characteristics that do exist internal to the Army include an existing force structure that can be globally sourced to provide a specifically tailored and rapidly deployed force for support and stability type operations. Additionally, the Strike Force Concept establishes a redundancy to a sister service – the Marine Corps – and the method by which it organizes and deploys (force projection) as the Nation's 911 force. Do these redundancies negate the requirement for a Strike Force capability within the Army? What if they do? The truth of contemporary and future challenges to the military establishment include the continued reductions in force in terms of personnel, funding, and resources; and a continued high operational tempo – all being exacerbated by a dangerous and uncertain world. There is plenty of business to go around.

Has an Operational Requirement for Strike Force Been Established?

There is no doubt that an operational requirement for Strike Force has been established. Recognizing the changes in the post-Cold War global environment, the Army's senior leadership, namely Generals Reimer, Hartzog, and Abrams, have all

recognized the need to change if the Army is to play a role in America's National Security Strategy. The reality of global conflict, the Nation's vital interests, and the current state of the Army, necessitate change – not incremental change, but innovative change – such as that of the Strike Force O&O Concept. Acknowledging the Army is largely organized and equipped as a forward presence/deployed force, and not necessarily that of force projection, Strike Force planners developed a three-phase strategy to decrease deployment timelines, and increase options regarding task organization.

Is the Strike Force O&O Concept a Relevant and Viable Option?

The evaluation criteria employed within this monograph, to include the Army's mission statements, the AUTL, the Joint and Army Vision statements, the five goals of the Army's Modernization Plan, and the MAGTF organization and SJTF lessons learned, have illustrated that the Strike Force O&O Concept is a viable option for response to global crisis. In order to continue in Strike Force development, the Army still must make many decisions. These decisions include but are certainly not limited to the following:

- How will Strike Force determine which units will be designated to support its operations?
- How will the Army train for the various each type (ODSS) of contingency? Recent congressional testimony by the commander of opposition forces at the Army's National Training Center at Fort Erwin California stated that the Army cannot currently prepare for conventional high-intensity conflict let alone support and stability operations.¹²² Further research and analysis is required to overcome this limitation and the Army recognizes the challenges involved in training for ODSS missions, it needs to determine just how it will achieve this goal.

- The Army needs to accept the reality of responding to crisis... it can not have a dedicated force for every contingency.
- The Army needs to consider the implications of integrating both AC and RC in Strike Force Operations. The over-arching question is; can the RC element of SF meet the compressed deployment timelines and be trained to standards?

Future Recommendations

To assist the further development process of the establishment of a Strike Force capability within the Army, the following recommendations are offered. First, the author is not convinced that all parties working the Strike Force issue fully understand the concept. This conclusion is based upon a number of inconsistencies within the various documents pertaining to the development of Strike Force, many of which consist of working papers, PowerPoint® presentations, and electronic mail. The two major inconsistencies – whether or not Strike Force will possess a forcible or non-forcible entry capability, and whether or not the headquarters element will act as a JTF.

The second recommendation pertains to Marine Corps lessons learned regarding task organizing, force projection, and the issues related to the SJTF headquarters; all of which should be studied to facilitate further planning of the Strike Force O&O Concept.

Third, the Army needs to get the word out on Strike Force, primarily what is it, why the Army is experimenting with it, and what its impact will be on future operations. The Army cannot develop the concept in a vacuum. The author is convinced that many of the skeptics within the Army disagree with the Strike Force Concept out of ignorance – they simply do not have access to program details and that the entire program hinges on force tailoring and projection. As such, the United States Air Force and Navy have a vote in

Strike Force as well as these service components will be tasked to provide the strategic lift. The upcoming Joint Contingency Force (JCF) Advanced Warfighter Experiment will be the perfect opportunity to validate the concept from both an Army and joint perspective.

ENDNOTES

¹ Sean D. Naylor, "Strike Force struck down...for now," Army Times (Springfield, VA 4 January 1999), 9.

² U. S. Department of the Army, FM 100-5 Operations (Revised Final Draft), (Washington, D. C.: Online Source: <ftp://160.149.109.31/cdd/pdf/f465/f465rfd.pdf>, 19 June 1998), 2-23 – 2-32. Although the Revised Final Draft of FM 100-5 Operations has been returned for revision, the types of military action – that being offensive, defensive, stability and support (ODSS) – continue to be used within the various documents pertaining to the Strike Force Operational and Organizational Concept. For this reason, ODSS will be defined according to this most recent version of FM 100-5. They are defined as follows. Offensive operations are the decisive type of military action, which involves taking the fight to the enemy. The purpose of the offensive is to destroy the enemy, seize terrain or facilities, disrupt enemy attacks, deny the enemy resources, deceive and divert the enemy, fix enemy forces, and gain information. Defensive operations are intended to retain terrain, deny the enemy access to a particular location, and to damage, deter, or defeat the enemy's attacking forces. The purpose of the defense is to defeat or deter the enemy, gain time, develop the situation for follow-on offensive operations, destroy or trap the enemy, deny the enemy into a specific area and/or resources, and to exercise economy of force in one area while massing forces in another. Stability operations involve the application of military force in order to sway the political and civil environment, to promote diplomatic initiatives, and to halt illegal activities. The purpose of stability operations are to deter or prevent aggression, ease the concerns of allies, encourage a weak/susceptible government, stabilize a potential flash point/area, maintain/restore order, and enforce agreements, treaties, and policies. Stability missions include: Peace operations, combating terrorism, counter-drug operations, noncombatant evacuations, arms control, nation assistance, support to insurgencies, support to counterinsurgencies, show of force operations, and civil disturbance. Support operations are humanitarian in nature and provide essential life-sustaining supplies and services to groups and/or countries following natural or man made disasters. The purpose of support operations is to save lives, lessen human suffering, salvage life-essential infrastructure, ameliorate the quality of life, and restore the situation to pre-crisis conditions. Support operations include humanitarian assistance and environmental assistance.

³ Naylor, "Strike Force struck down...for now," 9.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Statement of General Dennis J. Reimer to the 106th Congress on the "State of the Army," (10 February 1999), 10.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid., 11.

⁹ Sean D. Naylor, "Army's Strike Force Mimics Marine Corps' Mission," Marine Corps Times (8 March 1999), 22.

¹⁰ Anonymous. "New Division Design Centralizes CSS," Army Logistitian, (September/October 1998), 1-3.

¹¹ Ibid., 2.

¹² Naylor, "Strike Force struck down...for now," 9.

¹³ Anonymous. "New Division Design Centralizes CSS," 2.

¹⁴ Sandra I. Erwin, "Army Trims Heavy Division in Pursuit of Speedier Force," National Defense (July/August, 1998), 24.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Naylor, "Army's Strike Force Mimics Marine Corps' Mission," 22.

¹⁷ Erwin, 24.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ United States Army Training and Doctrine Command, "Strike Force Operational and Organization Concept," (PowerPoint® presentation, 25 January 1999), 4.

²⁰ Ibid., 8.

²¹ Ibid., 5.

²² Ibid., 5, 9.

²³ Ibid., 6.

²⁴ Naylor, "Army's Strike Force Mimics Marine Corps' Mission," 22.

²⁵ United States Army Training and Doctrine Command, "Strike Force Operational and Organization Concept," (PowerPoint® presentation, 25 January 1999), 6.

²⁶ Ibid., 15-22.

²⁷ Ibid., 6.

²⁸ Ibid., 9.

²⁹ Ibid., 7.

³⁰ Ibid., 5.

³¹ Ibid., 7.

³² Ibid.

³³ White Paper (Draft), "Strike Force Headquarters Operational and Organizational Concept," (Undated/developed approximately December 1998), 2.

³⁴ Ibid., 14.

³⁵ Ibid., 40.

³⁶ United States Army Training and Doctrine Command, "Strike Force Operational and Organization Concept," PowerPoint® presentation to the U. S. Army School of Advanced Military Studies (5 February 1999).

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Joel Garreau, "Point Men for a Revolution," Washington Post (6 March, 1999), A1. The "three-block war" is a term coined by the Marines during their Advanced Warfighting Experiment, "Urban Warrior." The concept deals with future military operations in an urban environment in which the Marines could quite conceivably by conducting multiple types of operations within a three-block area, such as in Somalia or Haiti. For instance, in one city block Marines could be conducting humanitarian operations, while conducting peacekeeping operations in the next block. In addition, conventional military operations – complete with close air support and precision guided munitions – could be taking place simultaneously in a third adjacent block.

³⁹ TRADOC, "Strike Force Operational and Organization Concept," PowerPoint® presentation to the U. S. Army School of Advanced Military Studies, (5 February 1999).

⁴⁰ Staff Writer, "USA – Army Assesses Future Strike Force," Defense News (24 November 1998), 1.

⁴¹ TRADOC, "Strike Force Operational and Organization Concept," power point presentation to the U. S. Army School of Advanced Military Studies, 5 February 1999.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ United States Army Homepage (http://www.army.mil/mission_vision.htm), (30 March 1999), 1.

⁴⁸ U. S. Department of the Army, FM 100-5 Operations (Revised Final Draft), (Washington, D. C.: Online Source: <ftp://160.149.109.31/cdd/pdf/f465/f465rfd.pdf>, 19 June 1998), 1-13. Although the this draft of the FM 100-5 is being re-written, the data regarding the Army functions contained in Chapter One of the reference is also contained within Department of Defense Directive DODD-5100.1, *Functions of the Department of Defense and Its Major Components*, 25 September 1987.

⁴⁹ U. S. Department of the Army, United States Army Posture Statement FY00, (Washington D. C.: Office of the Chief of Staff, U. S. Army, Congressional Activities Division, February 1999), 23.

⁵⁰ FM 100-5 Operations (Revised Final Draft), 7-5 – 7-6.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² United States Army Posture Statement FY00, 2.

⁵³ Ibid., 3.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 3-4.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 4-5.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 25.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 25. This program "...monitors the procurement of C17 Globemaster III aircraft by the Air Force and additional Roll-On/Roll-Off (RO/RO) ships by the Navy to correct the shortfall in strategic lift." Currently, 47 of the total required 134 C-17s have been delivered as well as 19 large RO/RO ships have been contracted for purchase by the Navy, of which eight have been placed into service. Once delivered, the 19 RO/RO ships will be apportioned with eight devoted to pre-positioned afloat shipping, while the remaining 11 will be dedicated to surge sealift operations.

⁵⁹ XVIII Airborne Corps & Fort Bragg Home Page, (30 March 1999), 1.

⁶⁰ United States Army Posture Statement FY00, 10.

⁶¹ CJCS, Joint Mission Essential Task List (JMEL) Development Handbook, (December 1995), 3-5.

⁶² U. S. Department of the Army, FM 100-5 Operations (Revised Final Draft), (Washington, D. C.: Online Source: <ftp://160.149.109.31/cdd/pdf/f465/f465rfd.pdf>, 19 June 1998), 7-20.

⁶³ FM 100-5 Operations (Revised Final Draft), 7-21.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Anonymous. "New Division Design Centralizes CSS," 1-3.

⁷¹ Naylor, "Army's Strike Force Mimics Marine Corps' Mission," 22.

⁷² White Paper (Draft), "Strike Force Headquarters Operational and Organizational Concept," 2.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 3.

⁷⁷ United States Army Posture Statement FY00, 35.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 3.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² United States Army. FM 100-5 Strategy Session, (Fort Monroe, Virginia: 11 February 1999) 6.

⁸³ Ibid., 34.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 36.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 37.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 37-38.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 38.

⁸⁹ Statement of General Dennis J. Reimer to the 106th Congress on the “State of the Army,” 10.

⁹⁰ United States Army Posture Statement FY00, 39.

⁹¹ Ibid., 40-41.

⁹² Naylor, “Army’s Strike Force Mimics Marine Corps’ Mission,” 22.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Headquarters, United States Marine Corps, Department of the Navy. Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication 3, Expeditionary Operations, (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 16 April 1998), 69.

⁹⁵ Headquarters, United States Marine Corps, Department of the Navy. Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication 1, Warfighting, (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 20 June 1997), 55.

⁹⁶ Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication 3, Expeditionary Operations, 69.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 70.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 71.

⁹⁹ Ibid. The Marine Corps possesses three active duty and one reserve infantry division.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 72.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Ibid., 71.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 73-74.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 69.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 77.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 75.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 69.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Richard S. Long, "Standing Joint Task Force Headquarters Activated at Camp Lejeune," Marine Corps News Release # H6796, (Division of Public Affairs, Headquarters, United States Marine Corps, Washington, D. C.: 23 February 1996), 1-2.

¹¹⁰ Mark T. Goodman and Richard M. Scott, "Standing Joint Task Force: Opportunity Lost," Marine Corps Gazette (September 1998), 38.

¹¹¹ John J. Jackson, "The Corps' Newest Headquarters," Marine Corps Gazette (February 1997), 32.

¹¹² Ibid., 32-33.

¹¹³ Ibid., 33.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Anonymous, "SJTF Stands Down," Marine Corps Gazette (July 1998), 5.

¹¹⁶ Goodman and Scott, 38.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 39.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Naylor, "Army's Strike Force Mimics Marine Corps' Mission," 22.

¹²² John D. Rosenberger, "Testimony Before the Military Readiness Subcommittee, Committee on National Security, United States House of Representatives First Session, 106th Congress (26 February 1999), 2-3.

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